

ComancheZOOM for Thursday, January 30, 2025

Topic: Ditching for Real - the story of a Comanche 250 water landing - and survival!

We learn the most from those who survive, and this one has a LOT of good examples of things that worked.

Alysia Larson, our pilot-presenter for this ComancheZOOM, will be joined by Allan Moore, Patty Wagstaff's chief instructor for upset avoidance and recovery training.

Last March, Alysia Larson was flying her late father's Comanche back home, she in the left seat and her husband in the right, to join her own beautiful Comanche. It was their third flight of the day, and so far all had been uneventful. On approach to Quonset State, with 20Kt headwinds, she went to add power to correct the sink rate, and no response. What kinds of training helped when the engine failed on approach over rough water? Once in the water?

Important questions on approach:

- Gear / wheels up or down?
- How much time do you have to react when your engine fails?
- How does altitude affect time to impact?
- What do you realistically have time to do in those seconds?
- What attitude to contact the water, flare or 3 point?
- Door open or closed?
- Clothes on or off?
- What about CRM?
- A-N-C: What to say, if anything?

Important questions on "landing":

- How much time do you have once the airplane is in water?
- Who do you call then, and why?
- What is the startle reflex?
- What is the Moro reflex and why do we care?
- How fast do you sink with no power?
- How is sinking affected by gear up vs gear down?
- And more...

Learn about the decisions made, the training Alysia, a fairly newly minted pilot with a recent Commercial rating, had taken, and how and the way it made a difference.

Hint: Alysia was a relatively new pilot but had invested in transition training into her Comanche by Mike Neuman. Mike is an experienced Comanche instructor who had created the Piper Comanche Workbook Workshop, that he offered in person at ComancheTown, and again on the ComancheZOOM.

Alysia also invested in CAP survival training, and in Upset Avoidance and Recovery training at Patty Wagstaff's school in St Augustine.

She says they all played a role.

At the time of this Zoom the accident was still an active NTSB case. We will avoid speculation and focus on available training and its apparent effects on this remarkable outcome, as well as the roles that skill, luck, timing, and providence played.

Additional information:

- [Channel 10 news report.](#)
- Patty Wagstaff's [Upset avoidance & Recovery training](#):
- CAP [Aircrew Survival trainings](#):

To see/hear the Jan 30 recordings click on a link below:

- <http://meetings.northeastcomanche.org/zoom/2025-01-30/video.mp4>
- <http://meetings.northeastcomanche.org/zoom/2025-01-30/audio.m4a>

To read the Chat text click on this link:

- <http://meetings.northeastcomanche.org/zoom/2025-01-30/chat.txt>

Pete Morse for the ComancheZOOM team